

VZCZCXYZ0002
RR RUEHWEB

DE RUEHAM #1340 1660650
ZNY SSSSS ZZH
R 150650Z JUN 09 (CCY ADX7910ED WSC9619-623)
FM AMEMBASSY AMMAN
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 5294
INFO RUEHEE/ARAB LEAGUE COLLECTIVE

S E C R E T AMMAN 001340

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (PARA NUM)

SIPDIS
NOFORN

E.O. 12958: DECL: 06/10/2019
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [KDEM](#) [JO](#)
SUBJECT: PRINCE HUSSEIN INFORMALLY BEGINS OFFICIAL ROLE AS
JORDAN MARKS TEN YEARS OF KING ABDULLAH

Classified By: Ambassador R. Stephen Beecroft
for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (S/NF) Summary: King Abdullah marked ten years as Jordan's monarch on June 9 with a parade through Amman which culminated at the city's main soccer stadium. The Minister of Education, who was responsible for organizing the spectacle, resigned on June 11 in what some are calling a reaction to lackluster turnout at the events. While many were expecting a major policy speech and the introduction of the King's son Hussein as Crown Prince, neither materialized. Efforts are underway to gradually introduce Hussein's participation into official events, however. End Summary.

Jordan Celebrates Ten Years of King Abdullah's Reign

¶2. (SBU) To mark the anniversary, the King addressed the nation on state television with a triumphant but fairly generic speech touting the strength of the nation and its people. While many were expecting the announcement of a major policy initiative, the King focused primarily on economic development. Following a large parade through the center of Amman, the King presided over a carefully staged ceremony at the main soccer stadium which featured a military camel corps and large-scale chants in favor of the King by tribal leaders and youth groups.

¶3. (SBU) Minister of Education Tayseer Nueimi resigned unexpectedly on June 11. While news stories noted that he was departing for "health reasons," online news sources report that Nueimi was being punished for the lackluster turnout at the celebrations, which he was in charge of organizing. Walid Maani, the Minister of Higher Education, will absorb the responsibilities of the Minister of Education into his current portfolio.

The Future Is Not Set

¶4. (S/NF) In the weeks leading up to the celebrations, Amman was abuzz with popular speculation that King Abdullah could officially name his fifteen year-old son Prince Hussein as Crown Prince during his national address. While no official announcement on royal succession was made as part of the celebrations, it is clear that the Prince is starting to acquire a more active public persona and protocol role.

¶5. (S/NF) Prince Hussein has also been conspicuous at several recent protocol events. During the anniversary celebrations, he appeared in the royal box at the official celebrations seated in the protocol area next to the King's brothers rather than the portion reserved for King Abdullah's other children. During an official reception for Jordanian Independence Day on May 24, Prince Hussein was observed standing slightly apart from the Prime Minister as part of

the receiving line. Royal Court Chief Nasser Al-Lozi later confirmed to the Ambassador that Prince Hussein's appearance at the event was part of a conscious plan to introduce him to the political elite and foreign dignitaries.

¶6. (S/NF) While many of our contacts expected an announcement, they were not dismayed by a continuance of the status quo. Many see the announcement of Prince Hussein as Crown Prince as inevitable. Article 28 of Jordan's constitution holds that the eldest male descendant of the King succeeds his father, unless there is a royal decree which designates one of the King's brothers. This holds true even when the heir apparent is under 18. In such a case, royal powers would be invested in a regent or regency council appointed in advance by the outgoing King or (if the King has failed to do so) the council of ministers.

¶7. (S/NF) Average Jordanians recognize that Prince Hussein will be the next King, but nevertheless feel that this represents a reversal of a promise King Abdullah made to his father near the end of his life. It is common knowledge that King Hussein exacted a promise from then Crown Prince Abdullah that he would name his half-brother Hamzah as Crown Prince upon his accession to the throne. For the first five years of his reign, Abdullah kept this promise. Yet in 2004, he stripped Prince Hamzah (whose mother is Queen Noor) of his title. Since then, Jordan has been without a designated Crown Prince. While there are many theories as to why this happened, Jordanians we have talked to are largely indifferent about Prince Hamzah's exclusion from the line of succession.

Beecroft